

Abstract of the Disclosure

An Electronic Document Answering Machine is adapted to connect to remote information sources and to download digital documents including e-mail and WEB pages, and to store the documents for later review by a user. The Answering machine has an alert device for alerting a user that new documents are available for review, and an initializing device for a user to cause documents to be communicated for review one-at-a-time. In a preferred embodiment documents are communicated over a speaker via voice synthesis. In an alternative preferred embodiment a small display is provided wherein documents may be displayed in alphanumeric characters. The answering machine can be implemented as a stand-alone device or can be connected via a serial port to a host PC for transferring documents to the PC for processing and review. In other embodiments the Answering Machine is implemented as a system in a PC, with alert and selective input added as an interface. The interface can be in a keyboard, and can be provided by existing keys and LEDs on a keyboard. An Answering Machine is also provided as a set-top-box for a TV, downloading digital documents from the Internet and providing the documents with user prompting to a TV via an audio/video output. prompting may be by infrared input from a remote controller.